THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYT. LER): (a) to (d) With the liberalisation of Government policies, a revi. val package was extended to Indian shipyards in the public sector in 1993. The highlights are as under: —

(i) The price of an ocean-going vessel to be built at Indian yards may be fixed on the basis of open tender, the Indian shipyards being permitted to match the lowest bid Thereafter, the shipyard would be entitled to 30 per cent extra price over the above price.

(ii) Loans at concessional rate of 9 per cent to the extent of 80 per cent of the cost of a ship will be given to shipping companies placing orders with Indian yard^.

(iii) Fixation of price in terms of US $|Japanese Yen and the shipowners to pay each stage in instalment to the shipyard at market determined parity rate of foreign exchange prevailing on the date of actual payment.

The shipbuilding industry is open to private sector irrespective of the size of the ship.

Japanese Assistance for Development of Ports

1465. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state;

(a) whether Japan has offered assistance for the development and improvement of Ports;

(b) if so, the detail of the assistance offered;

(c) whether any assistance obtained from Japan has been earmarked for ports in Andhra Pradesh; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRAN^TORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER); (a) to (d) At present there is no such development assistance from Japan for the development and im provement of Ports in this country.

Conversion of Port Trusts into Corporations

1466. SHRI SOM PAL: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are thinking of giving autonomy to various port trusts, to facilitate expansion and modernisation of Indian Ports;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether Government would consider converting the port trusts into corporations or companies and permit them to raise their own resources from the market; and

(d) if so, by when the decision is likely to be taken and If not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) to (d) The Majoi Port Trusts are autonomous bodies under the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963,

The question of converting porl trusts into companies or corporations was considered by the Government and it was found that the existing framework and structure of Majoj Port Trusts Act, 1963 is flexible enough to enable the Port trusts to generate their own revenues and re. sources needed for development and modernisation.

Reducing the Pollution by Petrol Driven Vehicles

1467. DR. ISHWAR CHANDRA GUPTA: Will the Minister of SUR, FACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken to reduce pollution caused by petrol driven vehi. cles in big cities of the country;